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REA ROLL CALL

For REA Men and Women in Service

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K. P. COME AGAIN NO MORE

Pvt. Marvin T. Bates is quite convinced the Army hasn't done any too well by him. Out of only five Sundays off in his 2½ years of service, three of them he's spent on K.P. He's still on the West coast, but has swapped Seattle for San Francisco which he thinks is much better. "More of everything, and places to go," as he explains it.

The United Nations Conference accounts for his transfer to San Francisco. "Us fellows are down here for the Conference, but can't get within a block or two of the buildings. We are the defense of the city."

DYNAMITE TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT

Lt. (j.g.) W. A. Lewis' outfit has moved to another one of the Philippine Islands, on the better-climate side, where it has set up its own base with him in charge of all electrical and electronic gear on both the base and boats, which, he says, doesn't leave him much time to be lazy.

The way the Filipinos climb poles intrigues Lt. Lewis. "All power poles are concrete. The linemen wear tennis type shoes and climb the poles in practically the same method used on coconut trees---no climbers and no belts. They sit on the cross-arms."

The Japs skipped out of this island ahead of the invasion, leaving the place full of booby traps not too cleverly hid, but deadly. "Luckily," he points out, "no one was hurt even if we did find a case of dynamite under the steps of the officers' club----a week after we began using it.....The Japs made a grave mistake in leaving air pressure in the local power plant (Diesel) and in only dynamiting two of the five generators. When the Army moved in, all they had to do was rewire the switchboard (which was ruined by fire) and turn over the good generators. Metering was quite a problem until a few jap meters were found."

TWO TAKE A JEEP RIDE

Navy Lieutenant Wm. C. Morris, recently shipped over, condemns the Army transport that took him to the Hawaiian Islands, concluding with true Navy loyalty, "I sure wish we had come on a Navy ship. We would have eaten a lot better than we did." Bill thinks the chief fault with Oahu is that the place is completely over-run with the Army and the Navy. In the famed Waikiki beach he was disappointed----it's too narrow and short to be interesting and the sand is too rough (coral). Its one redeeming feature, he thinks, is the palm trees. Honolulu, too, falls into disfavor in his opinion because of what he calls its tacky appearance with so many joints cluttering it up, all of them intent on getting the service man to part with his money.

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"WHOA" TO THE HORSE MARINES

Living underground has its disadvantages, but the safety makes it worthwhile, Capt. Warner T. Smith assures us from his "rock" somewhere in the Pacific where his unit is nipping the heels of the Nips. When he moves out to surface habitation, the discomforts of war plague him still because he then is billeted in a native's house where the ceiling is so low that tall Marines bump their noggins.

Otherwise this "new rock" suits Capt. Smith better than previous ones on which he has touched in his chase through the Pacific. He describes it, "The climate here compares with that of North Florida, being quite chilly at times. My breath was condensed for the first time since Frisco. Taking a cold water shower is rugged for one whose blood was thinned by the 120° heat of Guadalcanal.....It's a real treat seeing pine trees and other vegetation of a non-tropical nature. From some hill-tops you can get a view like that of Skyline Drive. Goats and horses abound here and it is a sight to see horse marines. I don't know how they control them as I'm sure Japs don't say, 'Whoa!'" (When a Marine says "Whoa," son, any beast that understands Japanese knows what he means! -- Editor)

THE FLOWERS THAT BLOOM IN BATTLE

Four years in the Navy, Lt. Comdr. Leonard T. Mikules makes up for a long silence (we even had him on our list of "Lost Ones") by writing what is perhaps the longest, as well as one of the most interesting, letters ever received by the Roll Call. From a descriptive standpoint, it was done up a'la National Geographic style, lacking only in illustrations. We take you now to Okinawa, turning you over to the powers of Mikules' pen: "Our huge convoy reached Okinawa during the small hours of Easter morning. It was bright, clear, pleasantly warm, springlike.....We approached the coral beach in shallow draft landing boats, disembarking a couple of hundred yards off shore to make our way to land over a steel pontoon causeway....."

"On our way to the first native village, we passed a number of the famed Okinawan tombs. These are curious structures, built of coral with a stucco or cement overlay, covering the faces of hillocks and ridges. These are family burial vaults, horse-shoe shaped. Normally kept sealed, these tombs are sometimes built singly and sometimes they stand together in rows of six or eight. They are set back perhaps a hundred yards from the road, and before each vault or group of vaults is a small patch of lawn surrounded by a low wall and planted with small native trees.

"The entrance block was removed from one. Near the mouth was a box containing assorted dismembered bones, smooth and brown like mahogany which has not been stained but into

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COLUMN WRITE!

ROLANDO FRANCESCHINI, a former engineer trainee from Puerto Rico, writes from Ft. Benning to say he is now a second lieutenant and that he reads the good news about REA going ahead on line construction with the release of materials. Rolando sends his regards to all REA friends, remembering with a warm heart the parties at some of their homes. He was being assigned to Puerto Rico.

SGT. ART FRANK has had another move. Of this latest one he remarks that it "has been rougher by far than my move to the Mariannas, having plenty of excitement daily." He says he has seen Jap pilots dying for the Emperor, but not enough to suit him. For the first time in 11 months he had had a hot shower and was feeling pretty spry over it. He hopes it won't be too long before he can rejoin the Insurance Section gang.

SGT. CLEMONT HAWKINS writes from Germany where "the cherries are ripe and roses are in bloom." He says Germany is a fine looking country and that it is a pity the people are "sick (in mind)." Since leaving Boston on the boat, Hawkins has been in 7 countries and every one of them makes him long for "the dear old U.S.A. and REA" just that much more.

Fred Trimble of D & C hears from round-about sources that his son, **CAPT. ROBERT TRIMBLE**, has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his work in Russia where he is commandant of his post. Capt. Trimble flies from Vladivostok to Lwow and all around on missions so shrouded in secrecy that not even his father knows what it's all about. He didn't even feel free to write back about his high award, but a buddy home on furlough informed the home folks.

Word from **CAPT. WM. P. ALEXANDER, JR.**, informs us that his present assignment in the Army is with the 321st Wing, 4th Air Force, and he travels up and down the Pacific Coast from Seattle to San Diego (comparable to the shuttling back and forth done by Marine Lt. James M. McCutcheon on the east coast as reported in a previous Roll Call issue).

Stationed in England, **SGT. STANLEY J. VEST** celebrated VE Day by attending a barbecue and dance. He goes to London on his passes and now that the lights have snapped on again, hopes to see how Piccadilly looks at night. An educational program is being put into effect for the boys with a variety of subjects offered, each man going to school nine hours a week in addition to regular duties. So Stan may be a schoolboy again by now.

The Roll Call hasn't been any too successful in locating those we asked help to find. Two on the long list are now chalked off, **LT. COLONEL LEONARD T. MERULES** and **PFC. DEAN COFFMAN**. They showed up with letters. But now another name can be added, **CAPT. HENRY F. LEDBETTER**. His Roll Calls are coming back marked "Unknown." Does anybody know where he shoved off to when he left with his unit from Malden, Missouri?

Legal is proud of **JOE BRAY**. He made the grade and is now attending the Judge Advocate General School at Ann Arbor, Michigan, as an Officer Candidate.

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When **LT. (j.g.) FRANCES RUHL** passed through St. Louis recently she was on her way to California, her new station. She will stop at Hiawatha, Kansas for a visit with homefolks. She had planned on six hours in St. Louis, most of which she expected to spend visiting REA, but the train was late exactly six hours which consumed her time, leaving only enough for a hasty phone call.

LT. BRUCE WATKINS is set down in the Pacific amid palm trees and flowers. No jungle ---cactus instead. The weather is good, chow is excellent, and liquor plentiful. There are even a lot of Waves, walking around alone, too, but because of his bald pate he says he anticipates no rush from them. He's watching for Major Joseph O'Brien's ship since finding out that it is headed his way.

LT. GILES PENSTONE made a stop-over visit at REA this week. He is being transferred from Frankford Arsenal near Philadelphia to the Judge Advocate General's office in San Francisco where he doesn't know what his duties will be. He had been visiting with his father at Pittsfield, Illinois, and had his wife, Edna (looking younger than ever) with him when he stopped in at REA. His work at the Arsenal centered mostly on court martial cases involving boys who jumped ship at the last minute to avoid going across. The usual punishment for this, when caused by mere panic as most cases were, was imprisonment for six months and 50 percent reduction in salary. If later they proved themselves in battle, the stigma was removed from their records.

The Roll Call, having a solicitude for every REA'er in service, feels that not until each returnee is properly interviewed should their names be taken from our list. Accordingly, **DICK ALLEN** and **JACK WRIGHT**, both formerly lieutenants with the Signal Corps, were looked up and found to be purring over their work as contentedly as you please, happy to be re-installed in REA. Both are back in D&C where the increased tempo of work occasioned by the WPB's lifting of restrictions keeps them hopping. Wright offers a belated apology to the Roll Call for never having written to it while on military furlough, but now sends a message to all REA'ers still in service that he hopes that soon they, too, may have the good fortune of an early release.

A recent communication from **LT. GEORGE E. MCPHEE** tells of meeting up with Lt. Wm. C. Morris and that famous jeep ride they took together in Hawaii, and warns us not to be surprised if one of these days we see him dropping in at REA for a week-end with the old gang. Until recently George has been a co-pilot on one of the Navy's rescue (hospital) ships which is a most exacting assignment. Now he is handling one of the huge transport planes that carries about everything, even to the heaviest equipment.

CPL. SYDNEY BERGER breezed in on what he figures is his "before going over" furlough. He has completed his training as a foot soldier (infantry). For one whole day he visited around in REA. (The Roll Call has put him on probation on two charges---for failing to supply change of address and neglecting to

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STEAMING UP IN WASHINGTON

The R. S. Webers represent a divided family. She's a captain in the Army and he's a lieutenant in the Navy. Distance also divides them. She's located in Paris (Air Corps Group) while his duties pin him to the Washington Navy Yard as Power Plant Officer and O. in C. of the Electric Shop. The electric shop has a total of 375 men and the power plant 175. Both places operate 24 hours a day. The boiler plant and operating station at the Navy Yard contains 10 boilers -- 13,000 h.p. total at 200 lbs. per sq. in. and 5 generators 20,125 K.V.A. Explaining further he says, "We operate all steam plants owned by the Navy in D.C., and also do all electrical work, new installation and maintenance, including the Navy Department building which is quite a lot of work and plenty of experience."

Lt. Weber meets up with numerous REA'ers stationed in Washington. Among them are: Art Hagen, Ken Hardy, Jack Derry, Harold Park, Frank Sapanaro, Dick Beamish and others from time to time.

KLINK TOURS THE RHINE VALLEY

Pfc. Ray Klink admits he should have written long ago, but "somehow the time just passed and in the meantime I've come to Germany. I was taken from the Air Corps, as many were, and we took six weeks of infantry training. We landed at Le Havre, France, and were taken across the Rhine without a stop. By this time I was sweating out getting into actual combat. As it is, I'm driving a command car and making some use of the German I know."

He continues the thumb-nail sketch of his Army life in Germany, "On one trip we crossed the Rhine at Dusseldorf, driving south along the river on the high banks of which the Germans grow grapes. It is nice country and rather mountainous. We are quartered on the outskirts of a town in a house that is just a little more like home----and that's where I'd like to be."

A WAC RETURNS TO REA

The first of REA's girls in service to return to work here is Zelda Krinowitz. Tech. Standards welcomed her back recently by an office get-together and a gardenia corsage. Her part in the war has been a traveling one. She was stationed at five different camps and finally wound up in New Guinea. She was supposed to go to the Philippines, but this never materialized.

Her most interesting experience during her Army life was the boat trip across, although she recalls with fervor her days at Santa Monica when such celebrities as Bing Crosby and others came frequently among them. The jungle birds with their beautiful plumage and songs so different impressed her a lot. Never any bobolink notes or other familiar bird songs but instead exotic sounds from deep within the hush of the jungle. Wild boars and snakes were about the only wild animals she saw in New Guinea.

FORTUNES OF WAR INCLUDE SHINGLES

T/Sgt. Reuben E. Fields writes from the International House in Chicago to tell us of his fortunes at the hands of the Army. "After about a year on the West Coast in and around San Francisco with several different outfits including Radar Maintenance School, a 90 m.m. anti-aircraft battery, and Stanford University, I landed at the University of Iowa for 3 months and was then sent here (Chicago) where I have been for well over a year. Am with the Corps of Engineers, but the job is strictly 'hush-hush' so am afraid I don't have anything of much interest to report....Am also taking flying lessons in my spare time." At the time he wrote us, he had just gotten out of the hospital after being laid up a couple of weeks with a case of shingles.

BY THE SHORES OF LAKE GARDA

Pfc. Dean Coffman, unreported for a long time, comes up with a nice long letter written from the now peaceful scenes of Moderno on the shores of Lake Garda in Italy. "I am with the M.P.'s at Fifth Army headquarters," he writes, "all located in buildings on this beautiful lake. It's quite a treat after tents in the mountain snow! It surpasses any other part of Italy for beauty that I have seen."

Pfc. Coffman has only recently returned from an emergency furlough of two months spent in Decatur, Ill., occasioned by the illness of his wife. This time he says it was much tougher to come over, but consoles himself with the thought that V/J Day he can return to the old civilian "grind."

BATTLE FLOWERS

(Cont'd.)

which a great deal of oil and wax have been rubbed and, like such wood, highly polished. All sorts of yarns fly about concerning the burial customs of the Okinawans....It is considered an honored filial duty for the daughters of a family to polish these bones lovingly with old brandy.

"Perhaps the most characteristic feature of an Okinawan village is the least pleasant--its smell. Goats are the favorite domestic animal with pigs a rather poor second; and everyone knows what attractive household manners these creatures have....The civilians we saw were mostly women and children, with a few withered old men. To see them trudging along the road, balancing great baskets full of old dun rags and fragments of household gear at both ends of a long pole yoked across their shoulders, conveyed a sense of weariness, of exhaustion.... Occasionally they appeared scared, but for the most part, if you directed your attention to them they would smile and bow as you passed them.

"The villages we visited were deserted. In some dooryards little patches of vegetables grew or maybe a flower garden. In one of these I stopped to look at a rose bush on which only a few flowers had opened, the rest being brown in the bud. At sight of their browned petals I thought 'How swiftly the roses pass in Okinawa' ----until I realized that it was the gunfire of battle that had made the flowers fade."

DOWN ON THE EQUATOR

From the Molucca Islands where he is busy with the duties of a disbursing officer, T/3 Howard C. Paine writes that "despite the fact that we are almost astride the equator, the climate is quite comfortably cool and, though the island is primitive, it is quite liveable."

JEEP RIDE

(Cont'd)

Bill ran across Lt. Geo. McPhee, a navy flier, and together they toured the island in a jeep. McPhee has been stationed there for over seven months so knows quite a bit about the place, making a very good guide. Describing this tour, Bill tells us, "We crossed the mountains from the top of which is the prettiest sight I have ever seen. From 4,000 feet up you look down on a green semi-circular plain and a bay with green and blue water dotted with small green islands...." The climate, he says, is o.k., just about like summer. It does cool down at night, and it doesn't rain too often.

In his camp they eat like kings (always an important point in any man's life). "For supper roast chicken, hot rolls, butter, soup, peas, potatoes, carrots, salad, iced tea, chocolate sundae, and cookies. You can have all you want of anything!" He speaks of having had supper recently with Philys Benson, another ex-REA'er, who is stationed there as a War Department civilian employee.

COLUMN WRITE!

(Cont'd)

visit this office.) Radiating his usual exuberance, Syd declares he likes Army life, and when someone remarked that he was looking mighty fine, he was quick to reply, "The Army is good to me!"

Navy people will soon see Sammy's book, "Power Unleashed," in ship's libraries; 2400 copies of it have been ordered by the Navy for that purpose.

GOING UP

S 2/c Robert F. Howell; Officer Candidate Wm. J. Bray; Pfc. Raymond J. Klink.

HERE TO THERE DEPARTMENT

T/3 H. C. Paine, APO 93, San Francisco; Lt. Wm. C. Morris, USNR, Box 22, FPO, San Francisco; Lt. Geo. E. McPhee, Box 13, FPO, San Francisco; Robert F. Howell, S 2/c, Sampson, N. Y.; Officer Candidate Wm. J. Bray, Ann Arbor, Michigan; Capt. William P. Alexander, Jr., Parkmerced, San Francisco, California; Pvt. Marvin T. Bates, Box 3191, San Francisco; Pfc. Raymond

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AWARDED BRONZE STAR MEDAL

It has been months since the Roll Call has had any word about Lt. Col. Cecil R. Hill. Last week came news about his being awarded the Bronze Star "for meritorious service in connection with military operations against the enemy during the period of December 7, 1944 to May 5, 1945 in Eastern France and Western Germany." As Inspector General, Lt. Col. Hill performed his duties in an outstanding manner during this period of combat. His administrative ability, keen initiative and interest in the morale of troops contributed greatly to success of the combat mission of the Division.

WHEN YOU WANT YOUR JOB BACK--

By John W. Asher, Jr.,
Chief, Personnel Division

You can have your old job back, or one of like seniority, status and pay whenever you get out of the armed forces. So this isn't intended to rush you into action. We just thought you'd like to know that after you have decided you want to get out of the service, and after you have applied for your job back, we can help you with presenting your case to the proper military authorities.

A memorandum from the Department Office of Personnel, states the following policy:

"Any employee of the Department, who is now in the military service, may on his own initiative originate a request through proper military channels for his discharge or release from military duty. The Rural Electrification Administration, as the former employer, may furnish to the employee in the armed services a statement to the effect that he will be reemployed in the REA upon his discharge or release, and indicate in the statement the capacity in which he would be reemployed. It will then be up to the military authorities to determine from all of the evidence available whether or not the employee now in the armed services can render more valuable service to the nation in a civilian capacity."

If you will address any request of this nature to the REA Personnel Division, such a letter will be prepared for the signature of the Administrator.

So if you are not needed in uniform to beat the Japs, and are trying to get your release, let us know about it. Especially if you are an engineer, we have work for you right now.

HERE TO THERE DEPARTMENT

(Cont'd)

J. Klink, APO 339, New York; 1st Lt. Harry N. Stafford, APO 14454, San Francisco; Sgt. Cle-mont Hawkins, APO 776, New York; Lt. Comdr. Leonard T. Mikules, FPO, San Francisco; and Lt. Donald G. Housley, Hqs. Bomber Command, APO 234, San Francisco.

BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS

All is quiet on this Roll Call front. If you got married or had a baby and didn't tell us, it's not our fault if this space is blank.